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THE TEACHING OF MODERN LANGUAGES IN ENGLAND.

THE teaching of modern language in England at the present time is chiefly remarkable for its infinite variety of types. For the sake of clearness, however, all may distinguish between three main schools or tendencies, which we may call respectively the Right, the Left, and the Center.

The first group, which is by no means homogeneous, is principally composed of the *vieille garde* of teachers who, owing to their bringing up or from lack of sufficient all-around knowledge, continue to teach on the old, orthodox, classical lines. Their recipe consists of plenty of grammar, translation, and composition. The modern language is treated *perinde ac cadaver*, and is parsed, analyzed, and dissected like a dead language. The mode of study is essentially a study of the dead organ, rather than of its living function, of its dynamic powers. Little or no attempt is made at linguistic vivisection. The ear is quite untrained, accent is largely neglected, and in extreme cases foreign words are not even pronounced, but spelt out in class. Conversation is completely at a discount.

The Left, on the other hand, which forms a still less homogeneous body, is composed of the more militant reformers. Great, and occasionally undue, stress is laid on the oral side of the foreign language. The straitest sect among the "New Methodists" does not allow a word of the mother-tongue to be heard in the class-room. The first lessons are purely *viva voce*.

In some cases there is no writing, not even in phonetic script. Ordinary texts are naturally barred. The teacher is the *fons et origo* of everything, the creator or conjuror who gradually by means of pictures and dumb-crambo produces the language, so to say, out of nothing. Phonetics are generally *de rigueur*. *Lauttafeln* are much in evidence, and when a text is introduced, it is generally printed in the phonetic script. The written work is not infrequently insufficient, and the lack of methodicalness is not unknown.

Between these two extreme wings come the main body of teachers whom we have styled the Center, represented by persons at every possible intermediate stage between the Right and Left, but united by the more or less conscious aim of desiring to arrive at a compromise between the two extremes. Sometimes the "cross" produced is excellent; in other cases it is a sort of mongrel which partakes of the defects of both. The principal points which distinguish the members of this group are the insistence laid on the reading-book as the center and source of instruction, and the attempt to practice the ear and tongue without neglecting the claims of grammar.

Let us look a little closer at the main tenets of the Right and Left. When we have discussed what their ideas are, we shall not only be in a position to gauge the views of the Center, but we may also possibly be able to some extent to postulate what seems the best way of teaching modern languages.

We will begin with the Right. What are their aims, and how do they hope to attain them? Probably they would state that their aim was threefold—namely, to give a mental discipline of the best possible kind, to teach the modern language in a scholarly fashion, and, in the third place, to utilize the modern language as a means of teaching the mother-tongue. They would insist that the grammar drill, the parsing, the picking to pieces of the texture of a foreign language and the reproduction of it in literal English, the analysis of construction, the practice of reconstructing these constructions, when turning English idioms into their foreign equivalences, provide the very finest training for the logical faculties. They would further argue

that these analytic processes furnish an unrivaled training in clearness and accuracy. More especially would they assert that translation was an admirable means of teaching the mother-tongue. And finally they would contend that the close study of the structure of the foreign language would alone make a man a scholar in the true literary sense of the word; in short, that a grammatical and critical study of the text was an indispensable aid to an appreciation of literature. They would ridicule the Left wing as a mere school of "patter and chatter," only fit to turn out foreign bagmen, interpreters, and waiters, and in their contempt for modern literature surfeit their pupils with Corneille and Racine.

Let us now take the Left wing. Their aim is more especially to teach the language so that the pupil may be able to understand, pronounce, speak, and even write it. They take little heed of the logical training of the faculties. They pour scorn on the excessive grammatical analysis of the Right, and insist on the larger rôle played by imitation in the learning of languages, especially in the case of young children. They emphasize the education of the ear; they point out the value of pictures and gestures as valuable adjuncts to the cultivation of the visual and the muscular memory. So far from believing that the foreign language is the best way of teaching the mother-tongue, they deliberately keep the two as distinct as possible. They argue that neither translation nor composition can adequately teach either language. They argue as follows: The pupil who turns English into French may become in some ways a master of the language, but he never arrives at the state at which the two languages are divorced from one another in his mind. He always sees the French through an English medium; like black care, the English is ever behind the French in his mind. In a word, he never learns to think in the language. The minority who lay stress on written work further point out that such a pupil never learns to think in an orderly fashion in the foreign tongue, which is the real meaning of the word "composition." The consequence is that, even when the pupil writes a letter in the foreign language, the English idioms involuntarily occur to him, with the result

is that his letter is a more or less pidgin version of the foreign idiom. In the case of the mother-tongue, he never learns to compose in it either. The foreign idiom always overshadows even the best translation. The most flexible translation is only the happiest of imitations. Even when the pupil forges for himself a good style, as far as phrasing is concerned, he can never learn from mere translation the far more difficult art of putting his phrases into paragraphs and his paragraphs into one harmonious whole. He never learns to compose in the true sense of the word. A vast deal of the weakness in English essay-writing comes from a neglect of the practice of free composition, in which the pupil has to arrange and combine his ideas. The Left wing does not thereby rule out the teaching of the mother-tongue. On the contrary, they insist on its being taught directly and not incidentally. They hold that a mastery of the mother-tongue must facilitate the mastery of a foreign language. If somewhat negligent of the literature, they maintain that the study of the language must embrace as rich a knowledge as practicable of the history, geography, and especially of the social condition of the people. Their motto is based on the theory, "What do they know of France who only French know?" Anything that crops up incidentally in the daily lesson should be illustrated by the teacher with explanations out of his own experiences, or by pictures, or even objects such as coins, newspapers, and actual products of the country. This study of *Realien* is often fortified by that of a conversation book dealing with the experiences of everyday life.

One must always be grateful to those who are pioneers in teaching as in everything else. We are deeply indebted to the reformers, not merely for the happy innovations and improvements they have introduced, but also for the unsuccessful experiments they have made, and even for the excesses they have committed, because in the latter case they put us on our guard as to what to avoid. On the other hand, we have reason to be thankful to the old-fashioned teachers for having held fast to certain truths that the new-methodists have been prone to ignore or overlook. The Center therefore appears to be in the right in

attempting to combine what is best in the two methods. Nevertheless, the question remains in what proportion they should be combined. The exact point, as we shall attempt to show seems to lie more in the direction of the Left than in that of the Right, at what, in fact, we may call the Left Center. This does not in any way imply that there is any hard and fast best method. The best method is not infrequently the method that the teacher, owing to his ability and idiosyncrasy, can carry out best. This is particularly true of the exceptional teacher with his moral earnestness, his enthusiasm, his power of discerning a way when the way, as far as we can see it, looks difficult, and his power to lead his flock along it or over it, and to stimulate them thereby to unusual exertion. No way can be condemned on the score of difficulty, if the flock can surmount it. Rather, the very difficulty develops in them stronger virtues than our more equable gradients can produce. The truth is, all these incommensurable qualities render it impossible for us to work out a universal solution of how the subject should be taught for all and sundry. None the less, thanks to the law of average, it is possible to indicate for the ordinary teacher certain methods and practices which it seems desirable to observe in order to insure the success of his own teaching and of the teaching of the subject throughout the school. When there are one or more teachers, there must be harmony of method. This does not mean uniformity; a sixth form cannot be taught in the same fashion as a first form. But the foundation lessons in the lowest class should be laid with a view to carrying and supporting the top story in the highest. Too often, for lack of symmetry in the methods adopted, a boy receives an education which at every stage reveals a diversity of architecture owing to the variety of teaching methods in vogue in the different forms.

With this standardization of methods in view, we will now attempt to define the position of the Left Center and its respective indebtedness to the Right and Left. It holds that the Left are undoubtedly right in their insistence on the spoken word. The younger the children, the more oral the teaching should be. In fact, in the case of children under nine what with pictures and

pantomime one can largely dispense with a text-book, and the whole lesson can be turned into a sort of informal *causerie*, provided the pupils are allowed to take an active hand in the game in the way of simple or concerted action, such as opening and shutting desks, rising or sitting down, coming up to the teacher's desk, etc. Under cover of these movements the various persons of the simple tenses of the verbs can be practiced. Variety may be further added by the introduction of songs, dialogues, and games for one or more persons, in which scope is given for simple elocution and gesture. A judicious amount of phonetic drill can be sandwiched in right from the start. It is not difficult to gain the children's interest by showing them how the sounds are made, but the drill should be laid aside, as soon as the children show signs of weariness, in favor of something more exhilarating. In pronunciation not only should a proper accent, but clear articulation, be insisted on from the very beginning. It is a common occurrence in English schools to find children with a fairly correct accent speaking under their breath, or failing to open their mouths sufficiently. There is no harm beginning modern languages thus early with young children, provided the teaching is largely informal, which, of course, does not imply that it should be formless. In fact, the teacher must think out very carefully what is to be aimed at, and how it can be produced, the main object being to teach the children to understand and speak the language and take a delight in it. The word "teacher" is used indifferently, throughout the present article, for a male or female teacher; but with these small children, whether boys or girls, the best kind of teacher is undoubtedly a woman. There is one other *caveat* to enter against the early initiation into a foreign tongue, and that is that the hours devoted to such lessons must not encroach on the time which ought to be devoted to the mother-tongue. The Left are quite right in their insistence of a thorough study of the mother-tongue. One may take it as a postulate of sound teaching—though the Right will probably bitterly contest it—that the study of the mother-tongue should always be in advance of that of any other language.

With pupils of nine and upwards the teaching may be made more formal. The pupils have already learned the arts of reading and writing. The phonetic script may be used and phonetic drill taught by means of *Lauttafeln*. The consensus of opinion seems to be that, if dropped after a year or six months, it does not render the acquisition of the ordinary spelling any harder, especially if pupils are not allowed to write it. Songs and dialogues have also here their place. But the introduction of a suitable reading-book, composed not of disconnected sentences, but of short stories, should be made as early as possible. Great stress should be laid on class reading which should be practiced separately and in chorus. Grammar, too, which is at times neglected by the new-methodists, should be largely taught inductively, being quarried out of the pages of the reader as the pupil goes along. There is probably little harm in learning the bare element of accidence by heart, though this drudgery may be lightened and rendered easier by the forms being given to be learned in the guise of sentences, such as "J'aime mon père," "Tu aimes ton père," etc.—a practice which is also a help to conversation. Syntax, on the other hand, should be mainly a matter of induction. While the rules should be made as far as possible a subject of discovery for the pupils, the teacher will bear in mind that all teaching is a match against time and when there is a danger of time being wasted, he will not hesitate to cut the Gordian knot and tell them to rule outright. Above all, from time to time the grammatical data thus collected should be synthesized and catalogued in the pupil's mind by means of revision out of a simple grammar. Thereby a double advantage is secured: the logical instincts are developed, and the pupil's scattered and diffuse knowledge is reduced to a portable and handy shape. The revolt of some of the extreme reformers against the classical dry-as-dust methods has carried them too far. What should we think of a library in which there were as many catalogues as there were authors, but no catalogue had been made of the library as a whole. Is it not enough to acquire knowledge; one must learn to pack it, store it, and render it ready for reference. Simple class directions should be given in

French, but the teacher must make sure that they are proper idiomatic French, not bald translations of English phrases. The teacher's whole attitude toward the mother-tongue is to make as sparing a use of it as he can, but it will not be "tabu." He will, in fact, regard it as a temporary scaffolding, to be taken down as soon as possible. It is probable that those who rigorously exclude the mother-tongue from the class-room, by no means exclude it from the pupil's mind. The picture of a *cheval* when shown to a beginner calls up the word "horse" in his mind, even if it is never mentioned in class. No doubt, in a good many cases the picture helps us to dispense with the mother-tongue, but when there is obviously a difficulty on the part of the class to understand the meaning of any term, and especially of an abstract term, it is far preferable for the teacher to say outright what it means, adding that, when it turns up again, the pupils will have to make it out by means of the French explanations. Much time will thereby be saved. The form will not be in danger of becoming listless from the fact that some have already understood, and the teacher will not be compelled to go the pace of the dullest pupil in the class, thanks to these occasional shortcuts. Again, English must be used at times by way of verification, at least in a large class, to find out if some pupil has really understood. And in the earlier stages of grammar, it is probably wiser to explain difficulties in English, at the same time giving the French equivalents for the rules, in order to prepare for the ultimate teaching of the grammar in the foreign tongue. One cannot too strongly insist on the absolute need of the class being kept together, and this can be expected only by assuring ourselves that the pupils have got clear ideas of the words they are using. Vagueness is fatal to linguistic training. It destroys all the value of the logical discipline. Moreover, when so large a portion of the lesson is conducted in the medium of the foreign language, a failure to appreciate a single expression, is nearly certain to bring about a failure to understand a new phrase in which it is employed as a stepping-stone to further knowledge, and so the *lacunae* in a backward pupil's mind tend to grow in geometrical proportion. Again, if the foreign language is too

exclusively used, it is far from easy to control the *fainéants*, the shirkers and malingerers. If they profess ignorance of something they should have already mastered, it is difficult to bring home to them that the fault is theirs. It is equally different to draw the line between culpable laziness and constitutional sluggishness to take in new data. In this way those who push the direct method to excess are apt to peptonize unduly their teaching, in order to make certain as far as they can, that the weaker vessels of the class are taking in what is said. There is thus a distinct danger that the clever pupils are not sufficiently drawn out or are even tempted to perform below their real merits.

More serious, from an English point of view, is the relaxation of the teacher's power to compel the pupils to tackle difficult, and even to them distasteful, problems, though undoubtedly this disciplinary loss is counterbalanced to a certain extent by the increased attractiveness the teacher is obliged to put into his work. Another gain which should be noted is that the teacher is so obliged to keep the attention of the form going that he has literally not the time to record and keep going the elaborate apparatus of marks so dear to many masters. This is more of an advantage than a disadvantage, for while marks in moderation are an undoubted help by way of stimulus in lower forms, this cult has been pushed to excess in English schools, where they have tended to become an undue burden to masters, and possess the additional defect of displacing the true ideals of learning and adding to the wide-spread "pot-hunting," spirit which is exemplified by the race for prizes and scholarships which has been quite overdone in England.

The written work at the outset should be light, consisting mainly of writing out grammatical forms, or of simple answers to questions dictated in class or written on the blackboard. All written work should be rigidly controlled. Some of the new-methodists profess indifference about the accuracy of written work. A mistake once made on paper is quite as difficult to eradicate as a mistake in accent or oral grammar. A certain amount of verse should be learned by heart. There is no surer help to the rhythm of the language; it is almost indispensable

in teaching voice modulation, stress, and *liaison*. It is a good subject for home work, as is also reading aloud, which is rarely given in English schools. If dictation is given at this stage, it should only consist of a passage which the pupils have already seen.

So far the teaching in these classes for beginners shows a "Left" tendency. But when we come to the vexed question of reading or translation, we at once come to a point on which expert opinion is deeply divided. Some would do translation from the start; the others would practice reading without translation for the first year or two. There is much to be said for both parties. Those who use the reader without translation insist that the entire avoidance of translation enormously strengthens the *Sprachgefühl*. The other side admits this to a certain degree, but believes, owing to the far larger amount of ground they are able to cover, the net gain is the same, or even greater, especially as they believe that conversation can be more quickly learned in this fashion. They further argue that, owing to the greater pace at which the work is taken, there is less chance of boring the brighter pupils, while at the same time they have greater scope for displaying their abilities. Certainly translation allows the pupils to read more bright and idiomatic books from the start—a matter of some importance in French, as anyone acquainted with the delightful children's books in that language will readily agree. Pupils brought up on more direct methods apparently require such simplified texts that all the *malice* and *espièglerie* of the language get evaporated off. Probably the best books for translation are those which give illustrations of unusual words in the texts, after the fashion of an illustrated dictionary, with footnotes of others, explaining in easier French their precise meaning, such as *tintamarre*=*grand bruit et désordre*. In this way most of the historical, literary, and other allusions can be explained to the scholar without the intervention of the mother-tongue. As for the subject-matter, it should undoubtedly deal with some phase or phases of modern French life. Whether the book be used for reading only or translation, the greatest attention should be paid to the reading

aloud, which is often very perfunctorily done in some schools. Above all, pupils should be encouraged to read with proper emphasis and spirit. When conversation is taught, as it should be, mainly from the reading-book, the following method may be followed with advantage: The teacher should begin by asking questions, the answers to which can be practically read directly from the book. If the class are quite beginners, to prevent any waste of time by beating about the bush, the teacher should make one of the class translate his question. The answer in French should at once be demanded. If the pupil cannot give this off-hand, let him give his answer, or the first word of it, in English. The number of question forms are so limited, and the pupils accustom themselves so speedily to this kind of cross-examinations, that the method of translating questions or answers can be easily dropped after two or three lessons, and the conversation henceforth will practically be in French. The complete sentence should always be insisted on by way of answers, at any rate at the beginning. No slovenly reply should be accepted. Mistakes should at once be noticed and submitted to the class for correction. The pupils should work at first with their books open, but should be encouraged to answer as far as possible without looking at them. They will soon learn to answer with them shut. It cannot be too strongly impressed on the teacher that questions at least at first should be based *on*, and not *about*, the subject-matter. Supposing there was a sentence which began, "Une veuve qui avait deux enfants," a typically right question would be, "Combien d'enfants avait la veuve?" a typically wrong one, "Qu'est ce que c'est qu'une veuve?" From such simple and easy sentences, to which the answers can be read from the book with little or no alteration, the teacher can pass to more general questions, beginning with those whose answers summarize the contents of a sentence of two or three lines, till he arrives at such as summarize the contents of a paragraph. The advantages of the method are many. Questions can be graduated to any degree of difficulty. With no other system can the teacher ask so many in so short a time. The pupil soon discovers that the method provides the least irksome means of

enlarging his vocabulary. Having read and translated the passage, he has the words already floating in his mind; the method of oral repetition helps to fix them definitely. It is likewise a valuable aid to composition, whether free or other; in fact, it is indispensable. The mere fact that the whole conversation, question and answer alike, is based on the reading-book, safeguards both master and pupil against falling into a phraseology which is barely French at all.

All these advantages are common, to a certain extent, to the system of reading without translation. Where, however, those who practice translation score, is in the far greater speed at which they can teach their pupils vocabulary. While the direct-methodist is ringing the change on some ten phrases which the class has more or less imperfectly mastered, the other teacher could ask in the same time some fifty questions from the reading-book. Now, this question of the acquisition of vocabulary is one of capital importance. It ranks equally with grammar and pronunciation. No one can be said to have mastered a language who has not mastered all three. The direct-methodist, by being obliged to harp on a few phases at the beginning in order to impress them on the pupil's mind, certainly runs a risk of unduly retarding the acquisition of vocabulary. Besides, there are, as a matter of fact, two sorts of vocabulary to acquire—one consisting of words which one uses in conversation, the other of words which one sees in print, but rarely, if ever, employs. The direct-methodist, with his penchant for making his pupils learn by heart every word they come across, defers to perhaps too late a date the acquisition of the vocabulary of unusual words, which is far the greater of the two.

After two or three years, if not sooner, it is extremely desirable that the reader should be definitely exchanged for some modern author, which would remain the center of instruction. Some persons at this stage would have two texts—one to be studied slowly and thoroughly for translation, grammar, and composition; the other, to be read aloud rapidly in order to give the pupils a real taste of the language. Such a system would combine the advantages of the two methods described above. Meanwhile the com-

position, which in its earlier stages consisted of the copying out of grammar forms, the ascertaining of simple questions based on the text in French or the turning into French of simple English sentences more or less of the nature of retranslation, should have grown and expanded into free composition in the text, largely aided by the conversational method given above, and of retranslation on a still larger scale. If original composition is attempted, it should be but seldom, and should take the form of a letter on some subject which has been thoroughly talked over by the teacher and the class together. Otherwise the pupils will begin to cut their canine teeth in French—a process which is always to be avoided, if possible. The only allowable exception, on account of its advantages in encouraging personal initiative, is participation in international correspondence. If the teacher is energetic, he can easily find foreign correspondents for the whole of his form, as there are always a majority of would-be writers unpaired on the other side of the channel. Later on, the same pupils who are going in business at sixteen might begin commercial French.

So far we have assumed that French is and should be the first language to be studied. As far as numbers go, French is studied in England in comparison with German in the proportion of at least five to one. In Wales it is still greater (5,506 French papers to 42 German in the last Central Welsh Royal Examinations). Some people are asking at the present time whether we should not rather begin with German. Those who favor German urge, that, owing to its accent, intonation, spelling, which is largely phonetic, and greater kinship to English, as far as common everyday words are concerned, it is an easier language for beginners than French. In intonation, accent, and spelling it is undoubtedly easier, though the question of accent for young children with its inflexible voice-organs is not so formidable as for those who are older. The advantages in word-relationship largely depend on the age of the learner and the vocabulary he has already acquired. The English boy of nine or ten who has already learned to read probably finds as many related words in French as in German. On the other hand, German, with its more abundant inflections, its numerous inversions, and its complicated word-order, is far

harder for the pupil who goes any distance into the language. One writer claims that we have most to learn from Germany "in the regions of science, philosophy, theology, in matters educational, commercial, and military." This is rather a large order. German is certainly necessary, or rather desirable, for those who engage in research in any of these subjects, but the output of France in original investigation is by no means to be despised, and what the French have contributed on these subjects has at least the merit of intelligibility. Besides, the great majority of these subjects lie entirely outside the school curriculum, and such knowledge as is required for reading an author on a technical subject can be easily got at later. The difficulty for the adult is not so much a difficulty of grammar as of the technical vocabulary to be acquired, which in any case cannot be acquired at school. Again, if philosophy is to be taught as a school subject—and there is much to be said in its favor—we must look to France and not to Germany. In France it has been long one of the best-taught subjects in school, whereas it is practically unknown in German schools, and the lack not only of philosophy, but of philosophical treatment of subjects in the higher classes, is recognized as a burning question even by the authorities themselves. If commercial reasons are to enter into consideration, the balance of advantages is on the side of France, for whereas our trade with the two countries and their dependencies is about equal, the ignorance of English which exists in France in comparison with Germany renders it far more important for our young traders to learn French. Supposing, however, that the *pro's* so far are on the side of German, there are two reasons which should make us decide in favor of French. One is that, as a preparatory study to Latin, German, in spite of its inflections and word-order, cannot compare with French, which is the direct descendant of the Latin language. The other reason is that, as a descendant of not only Latin but Greek culture, French with its unrivaled lucidity offers a far greater field for literary training and culture, supplying us with just that practice in clear and logical thought, and in the art of clear and concise expression, which we as a nation lack. A mechanical

imitation of the laborious industry of the Germans would be a poor substitute for what French offers us. If, as the case often occurs, pupils have time to study only one modern language, one cannot help feeling that the language with which pupils start should be French.

But our assumptions do not end here. As things are at present in England, Latin is in many schools often commenced simultaneously with French, with the result that the latter is never treated at any stage with the seriousness it deserves. Certain reforms are urgently necessary in this matter. We should, in fact, copy the so-called Frankfort method, which has recently been introduced on a large scale into the curricula of the lycées in France. The mother-tongue must be made of greater importance at the outset; foreign languages should be introduced into the curriculum one at a time; the study of such languages should be intensive, in order that a fine grasp should be obtained of one before the second is started, and so on; the order of language study should be French, and then Latin, and perhaps Greek, or French and then German. The Frankfort experiment has now been carried on sufficiently long to prove that the pupils who begin classics later, thanks to the intensive method of study and to their greater maturity of mind, are in no wise inferior to the others taught on the old plan. The great advantage, however, of the Frankfort system is that it enables parents to postpone till the age of twelve their choice of a classical or modern education for their boys whereas under the old system the decision must be made when the latter is only nine. One can only add that in the smaller English secondary schools these highly desirable reforms can be only rendered possible by a reduction of the present excessive hours given to science teaching.

But there is yet another lion in the path to a proper development of a well-thought out curriculum in modern languages, combining the advantages of the new with the old. The obstacle in question is the existence of a series of external examinations which practically dictate that the teaching shall be for all boys between the ages of fourteen and nineteen (and even younger). These examinations, though much improved of recent years, are

still conducted on mainly classical lines; in only a few cases have oral examinations been tentatively introduced. It would take us too long here to describe how in the near future they may be either transformed or diminished by the substitution of inspection.

Assuming the accomplishment of such reforms, what should be the ideals of modern language teaching in the higher forms? The answer to such a question must naturally vary with the nature of the school. In a classical school probably only one modern language can be taken up, and, with the introduction of first Latin and then Greek, it is manifest that the French cannot be developed beyond a good working knowledge of the language. In a school where Latin alone is studied, a further extension can be given to French, but it is only in the purely modern school, where it has to bear, either alone or with German, the full burden of linguistic training, that its teaching can be worked out in detail. Space permits us to consider only this particular case. As for the second language, let it suffice to say that, as it is begun at a later age (say twelve or thirteen), the teacher will be able to take the pupils along at a faster rate than in the case of the first language, and that, though the second language may not be studied in such detail, yet the methods followed will be largely the same in both cases. The reading-book, as before, should be the center of instruction, but, as the pupils proceed the bias given to the teaching should be more and more literary in the true sense of the word. Thus with pupils of sixteen and upwards, Racine and Corneille, so out of place in the lower classes, should now be studied, rather than second-rate modern novels. Such pupils should be able to appreciate the fine literary flavor of these classic authors, having by this time become possessed of a standard of comparison, through their acquisition of the modern idiom. The reading of selections and snippets should be reduced to a minimum. Authors should be read in large quantities, or in works complete in themselves, such as poems and plays. The teaching should, as far as possible, be conducted in the foreign medium. Grammar should not be pushed to excess, nor its modern supplanter, philology, though

a little handbook on historical grammar would not be out of place. But the instruction should be above all literary and critical. It should include discussions on the subject-matter of, say, the play the class was studying, with an analysis of the plot, of the principal characters, and of the stage-craft displayed by the writer, dealing with such questions as why such and such a person or incident is introduced. These matters might also be utilized as materials for original compositions. That parasite of modern education, the annotated edition, should be, as far as possible, dispensed with. Instead of studying a poem or play as an artistic and literary whole, the pupil has his attention perpetually called off and distracted by some footnote of fifth rate importance, while his taste and judgment are formed in advance for him by the critical appreciation prefixed to the text. What external information is required should be supplied by the teacher, or be hunted up by the pupils themselves in the reference library of the school. Alongside of the comparatively careful study of some classical masterpiece, the pupils should employ for rapid reading a play by the same writer, or by one of the same, or even a later, epoch, which would afford scope and subject-matter for comparison and contrasts. As the writings of some great French critic on the author in question might be simultaneously studied, at the same time, certain modern standard authors could be recommended to them for home reading. In the highest class some introduction might be made to the study of philosophy by the reading in class of Descartes's *Discours de la méthode*, or some of Pascal's works. The subject of commercial French and German is too big to be treated here, but in the case of boys who desired to specialize in commercial French and German, without going to a technical school, they should be drafted into a special class in which they might spend their last year.

But such an ideal curriculum presupposes proper class-rooms and suitable teachers. We in England have been slow to appreciate the educational value and influence of the *milieu*. Our pupils cannot go to the foreign country, but we can to a certain extent bring the foreign country to them. Just as the French

embassy in London is technically and legally French territory, so the French class-room in an ordinary school should be, as far as possible, an *enclave* of France in the middle of England. It should be decorated as much as possible *à la Française*; the pictures, photos, and maps should be French; the notices should be in French, and the "service," as we have seen, should, as far as practicable, be conducted in French. Pupils should have the same feeling of a change of atmosphere on entering it as they have on entering a church. The best classical class-rooms, however well-fitted up, can be only a *chapelle ardente* of departed glories; but the ideal French class-room should be a real-like bit of France, reproducing all that is best about it, just as a well-furnished conservatory is a replica of the best growth of foreign climes.

So much then for the shrine, and now for the *officiant*. We are met at the outset by the question whether he should be English or foreign. Continental expert opinion is practically unanimous in favor of the home-bred teacher in preference to the foreigner. The latter no doubt, when well educated, must possess his own language in a way to which those who have at a great price attained proficiency in the French or German cannot pretend. But the problem of teaching does not end with the attainments of the taught, and in power to communicate his knowledge the home-bred teacher possesses two tremendous advantages; he knows what are the difficulties of his own countrymen, and he also knows what is still more important, the idiosyncrasy of the British schoolboy. Hence he is able to foresee difficulties and overcome them methodically, and at the same time teach with a minimum of friction. Even in the matter of accent judicious teaching on phonetic lines will enable us to produce far better results than the sporadic efforts of the foreigner. Still in the larger schools there is undoubtedly a place for the foreign teacher to act as a sort of court of appeal on knotty points, to teach and correct the free composition in the higher forms, to take the pupils in conversation and in reading (where no translation is involved). We are about to start an interchange of teachers with Germany and France in the near

future, and for such work as has just been described, these "hostages of friendship" we are about to receive should prove invaluable.

But if we are to have "home-bred" teachers for preference, they must be thoroughly efficient. They must be something more than masters of mediæval French and German. They must be acquainted, not only with modern French, but also with modern France. In addition to a university course they should have spent at least a year in the country. It would probably make matters easier if this year were allowed to count in the number of years necessary for an English university degree, provided that the student were affiliated to a foreign university. Germany so far has done but little in the matter. But in France the International Guild, whose examinations are under the control of the university, and which is likely to be still more closely attached to it in the near future, provides exactly the training in phonetics, modern French, and modern literature that the would-be teacher desiderates. This excellent institution has been recognized by the Board of Education as a suitable place for primary teachers to study in their third year, and it has also been recognized by the University of Chicago; time spent in attending lectures at the guild count in the period necessary for a degree. What we want in England is for the central and local authorities to copy on a large scale the example of their *confrères* abroad in founding a large number of traveling scholarships, and in paying the expenses of those teachers who wish to attend holiday courses in France and Germany. The latter practice already obtains to a certain degree. Holiday courses, as far as they go, are of the greatest value, not only in helping to improve the knowledge of the weaker teacher, but in refreshing that of the better-trained teachers. When the best French-born teachers in England recognize the necessity of periodic visits to France, it is needless to dwell on the importance of such visits for English teachers.

To sum up: The above course, as we have seen, attempts to combine the best features of the old and new methods. It insists at the outset on the importance of the spoken word, with

special reference to correctness of accent and clearness of articulation. To this purpose it makes a large use of phonetic drill and the practice of recitation in prose and verse. It avoids making a fetish of mere fluency. It does not neglect grammar, while carefully guarding against its excessive abuse. It does not discard translation, though not always certain of the point at which it should be taken up. It makes, in fact, the reading-book the center of instruction, largely bases conversational practice on it, and insists on the extreme value of the latter as an aid to oral composition. It treats the language throughout as a living thing, and loses no opportunity to instil into the pupil a knowledge of the country and its social conditions, working in at the same time a certain amount of geographical and historical data.

In the higher classes it diverges into neither minute scholarship nor philology, but holds fast to the main idea of giving a sound linguistic, literary, and critical training with an initiation into the elements of philosophy at the top of the school. It avoids throughout the whole course the excessive abuse of annotated editions, making the study of the actual text the base and center of instruction. Without vigorously excluding the mother-tongue, it keeps it, as far as it can, in the background, allowing, however, in the higher classes, a reference to English literature for purposes of comparison.

It thus forms within the individual a separate yet dependent spirit, subordinate to the national one which gives him, as it were, a new window on the world, and realizes the truth of Charles V.'s profound saying that "*Mit jeder neuen Sprache gewinnt man eine neue Seele.*" Such a reduplication of the personality, which yet remains a unity at base, is one of the greatest aids to the formation of a sound judgment, which Montaigne regarded as the most precious product of education. Thanks to this two-mindedness, he who is a *doctus sermone utriusque linguae* possesses a power of comparison which it is difficult for a fellow-countryman of the same caliber as himself to attain. Comparing what is regarded as truth on one side of the Channel with what is looked on as error on the other, he sees more clearly than

others the exact proportion of verity contained in the two conceptions, and, in respect to changes and innovations, is far more likely to keep an open mind than one who swears by everything national. "In fact, his mind, from having passed its time, now in a French *milieu* and again in an English environment, must in the course of its travels have shed not a few prejudices and acquired no little wisdom; so that the learning of a foreign language may perhaps in its deepest sense be not inaptly regarded as a veritable transmigration of the soul."

CLOUDESLEY BRERETON.

NORFOLK, ENGLAND.